

Legislative Testimony

By: David Von Seggern

Bill: LD 307: Resolve, to Establish the Maine Artificial Intelligence Data Center Coordination Council

Date: February 4, 2026

Recommendation: Vote Ought-To-Pass

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology,

I am David Von Seggern, registered voter in the City of Westbrook, Maine. I am a retired earth scientist who has followed energy issues for decades and am a strong supporter of renewable energy to forestall global warming and prevent the climate crisis. I am alarmed by the projected growth of data centers nationwide and here in Maine and urge you to vote Ought-To-Pass on LD 307.

LD 307 would set up a council to study the potential impacts of data centers in Maine. This is laudable because the number and severity of impacts due to data centers is getting extensive national attention at this time. It makes sense to study their potential impacts within Maine itself because those impacts can vary considerably depending on political and governmental environment, on physical environment, on types and governance of utility companies, and on community values. To that end, items 3 and 4 in the list of study areas are most significant to me.

The electrical load nationwide due to data centers is predicted to increase to as much as roughly 700 TWh by 2030, as estimated by [BloombergNEF](#). This amount is significant (15%) compared to the overall usage predicted by 2030 of 4700 TWh by [ICF](#). These predictions provide rationale for carefully examining the potential impacts of data centers in Maine before they enter our communities and connect to the electrical grid. It can be argued that data centers present a new type of utility customer capable of causing disruptions of various sorts, including higher costs to current electricity customers due to the need to build additional infrastructure.

What I find deeply disturbing about the data center explosion though is the fact that they could easily absorb every new megawatt of renewable energy that we bring online in Maine if they are not required by policy to offset that usage with behind-the-meter power generation or other mechanisms that would keep from negating new renewable energy. We despairingly guess that new renewable energy may get entirely negated by demands of data centers, leaving us no less dependent on fossil fuels for electricity generation than now.

I emphasize that this is not just an AI consequence. The need for data centers is driven by the explosion of data generated in all facets of life, commerce, and industry. Business is increasingly data-driven, with large stores of data being acquired, often in duplicate across many data storage devices. The digital data stored for consumer benefit in entertainment, health, shopping, and elsewhere has become enormous. I therefore suggest that “Artificial Intelligence” be stricken

from the bill title because it appears to make the problem particular to AI where it is actually quite broad and general.

Lastly, I add that the corporations that are wanting to build data centers are led by the big six in the technology sector (Nvidia, Apple, Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Meta); these corporations have a market capitalization of nearly \$20T, more than the entire fossil-fuel industry. We should not hesitate to make sure that these companies do not cause any unwanted impacts on utility customers in Maine, the communities in Maine, and the physical environment of Maine. LD 307 is the beginning of that direction, and I urge you to vote Ought-To-Pass.